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stand that body of "imaginative pessimists" who justify all sorts of liberties with texts by assuming that they have come down to us corrupted by "multiplication by transcript after transcript" and by piracy after piracy, unresented and unatoned. It is refreshing to find, for once, opposed to this very popular black view of Elizabethan publishing conditions, an experienced bibliographer's theory of "imaginative optimism," based on a sound knowledge of the printing customs, and of the texts in question, as well as on an understanding of human nature and sound common-sense.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE SUMERIAN ORIGIN OF 'TUN' AND 'BARREL'

The origin of *tun*, from which the terms *tunnel* and *tonneau* are derived, is unknown. The derivation from the Celtic *tonn*, 'skin,' 'surface,' is unsatisfactory, although in the southern parts of Europe and throughout Western Asia skin-bottles are still used for the conveyance and storage of wine, water, etc.<sup>1</sup> Chaucer uses *tun* for *jar*, but, as a rule, it denotes a large *cask* for wine, beer, and other liquids. As a measure of capacity it was equal to about 250 wine-gallons. *Ton* is merely a more archaic spelling of *tun*.

Casks or barrels made of wooden staves bound together with hoops are said to have been invented by the Gauls. Pliny (14, 132) says: *circa Alpes vinum ligneis vasis condunt tectis circulisque cingunt*. For the storage of wine or oil, honey, grain, etc., the Greeks and Romans as well as the Orientals used large jars made of hard-baked clay, which had a pointed base, so that they could be inserted into the ground or into a stand; see Benzinger, *Hebr. Arch.* (1907), pp. 70, 223; Koldewey, *Babylon* (1913), p. 245. The Latin name of these vessels, *amphora* (Greek ἀμφορέως = ἀμφιφρεΐς, 'two-handled') appears in English as *amber*. The corresponding German word *Eimer* is supposed to denote a *one-handled bucket* or pail, while *Zuber*, our *tub*, is said to be a *two-handled tub*; but OHG *einbar* and *zwibar* represent merely popular etymologies. An *Eimer* generally has a hooped handle or bail. *Eimer* = *amber* is *amphora*, and *Zuber* = *tub* must be connected with *tube*. Similarly a half-tun (or butt) was called a *pipe*. In the eighteenth century *tub* denoted also a *small cask* for holding liquor. *Tub* is also a contemptuous term for a *slow boat*. A water-tight lining for a shaft in very watery ground is called *tubbing*. In England *tube* is used for a subway in the form of a tunnel.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. O. Schrader, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte* (1890), p. 378 n.

In Syriac a wine-jar pointed at the bottom so as to rest in the earth (Lat. *cadus* = Heb. *kad*) is called *dánnâ*. This word has passed also into Arabic (*dann*, plur. *dinân*). A basket-pot, i. e., a vessel of basket-work made water-tight with bitumen is called *kâfártâ* in Syriac. This word is derived from *kúfrâ*, 'bitumen' (*BL* 128). In Assyrian we find it in the transposed form *karpatu*, 'crock' (*AJSL* 32, 64) and *dánnâ*, 'amphora,' appears in the cuneiform texts as *dannu* (HW 225<sup>a</sup>; *AkF* 33) which seems to be a Sumerian loanword: Sumer. *dun* or (with the loss of the final consonant; cf. *SFG* 44; *SG* § 23, a) *du* means 'to dig,' 'excavate'; as a noun it signifies 'depth, shaft, hole.' Instead of *dun* (*SGL* 152) we find also *dul*, *tul* (*SGL* 150) with final *l* instead of *n* (*SG* § 22) just as we have *šudun* and *šudul*, 'yoke' (*SGL* 270). There is also a byform *tun* instead of *dun*; at the beginning of a syllable ending with a consonant surds and sonants often interchange in Sumerian (*SG* § 20, b). Sum. *tun*, 'excavation,' 'shaft' (*SGL* 164, below) may be the prototype of both our *tunnel* and *tun*. The wine-jars may have been called *dun*, *tun*, because they were dug in and partially buried in the ground. In the same way Assy. *xabû* (or *xapû*) amphora = Ethiop. *xēbāi* (*ZDMG* 63, 519, 7; 64, 705; *OLZ* 17, 495; *AkF* 33; *ZA* 30, 99) is derived from *xāba'a* 'to conceal, bury' (cf. Arab. *bā'ara* = *hāfara* and *xāba'a*; for *xepû*, 'to smash,' see *OLZ* 16, 493). We have the root *dun*, *tun* also in Sumer. *udun*, 'oven,' Assy. *utûnu*, *atûnu*, which has passed also into Aramaic, Arabic and Ethiopic; the ovens were large earthen crocks sunk in the ground (*DB* 1, 318<sup>a</sup>; 2, 73<sup>a</sup>; 3, 637<sup>a</sup>). For the prefixed *u* in *udun* see *ASKT* 136, § 5, a; *CV* 10; *JAOS* 37, 322, n. 11. Our *oven* (German *Ofen*) is not a Sumerian loanword, although the *t* of Assy. *utûnu*, which was pronounced *th* after a vowel, might become *f* (*ZDMG* 65, 562): *oven* is connected with *ἰπνός*, and Old Norse *ogn*, etc.

A synonym of Sumer. *dun*, *tun* is *bur*, *pur*, *pu* (*SGL* 70, 277) which means 'depth, hole, well, vessel, basin, bed of a river.' The Sumerian name of the Euphrates is *Bura-nunu*, the Great Basin or River. Heb. *yam*, 'sea,' is used also of a large basin and a large river. Sumer. *bur* appears in Assyrian as *pûru*, 'urn' (*κάδος*, *καδίσκος*, *κάλπις*) which seems to have been combined with the name *Purim*, and Heb. *pûrâ* denotes *ὑπολήμιον*, 'wine-trough' (*EB* 5311; cf. *Nah*, 43; *Est.* 30; *ZDMG* 64, 714, 10; *GB*<sup>16</sup> 637<sup>b</sup>. 675, l. 2; *AkF* 33). This Sumerian *bur* may be also the prototype of our *barrel*. *AV* uses *barrel* for Heb. *kad*, jar (*κάδος*, Lat. *cadus*) in 1 *K* 17, 12; 18, 34. In modern Arabic, *barrel* (French *baril*, Ital. *barile*, Span. *barril*, *barrica*) appears as *barmil*. We can hardly assume that Heb. *bôr*, 'cistern,' and *bêr* (not *bē'ér*!) 'well' (Syr. *bêrâ*, Arab. *bî'r*) are Sumerian loanwords; nor can Sum. *bur*, *pur*, *pu* be Semitic. Lagarde's etymology of *bî'r*, 'well' (*Nomina*, 58) is not satisfactory, but *bî'r* may be connected with

Arab. *birkah*, 'pool'; *bard* 'cold'; *barr*, 'righteous'; *sábara*, 'to sound, probe' (cf. *AJSL* 23, 242. 247). Assy. *báru*, 'to catch, to hunt, means originally 'to pit,' 'catch in a pitfall' (*AJSL* 23, 249, l. 12). Heb. *pûrâ*, wine-trough, may be a Sumerian loanword, and Sum. *bur* may also be the prototype of our *barrel*.<sup>2</sup>

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ENGLISH 'COOP' = ASSYRIAN 'QUPPU'

Our *coop*, from which the term *cooper* is derived, is the Assy. *quppu*, 'bird-cage.' Sennacherib says that he cooped up King Hezekiah of Judah in Jerusalem like a cageling (*šâšu kîma iĉĉûr quppi qirîb Ursalîmmu êsiršu*, *KB* 2, 94, 20). Arab. *qúffah* denotes not only 'cage,' but also a 'boat' used on the Tigris, which consists of a large round basket made water-tight with bitumen; see the full-page illustration No. 5 in Kaulen's *Assyrien und Babylonien* (1899) and cf. Suess, *Die Sintflut* (Prag, 1883), p. 13. Herodotus (I, 194) does not refer to these round basket-boats (contrast *EB*<sup>1</sup> 3, 481<sup>b</sup>) but to the rafts supported by inflated skins (Arab, 'âmah, plur. 'âm, lit. 'swimmer,' 'float,' from 'âma, ya'ûmu, 'to swim'). See the illustrations on p. 125 of the translation of *Ezekiel* in the Polychrome Bible. In German, *Kiepe* denotes a large 'basket,' while *Kufe* (Lat. *cupa*, *cuppa*) means 'tub' or 'vat.' Our *coop* signifies not only 'basket,' or 'box,' in which poultry is confined, but also 'cask, barrel, keg, tub, pail,' etc. *Basket* is identical with *bascauda*, 'washing-tub or brazen vessel' (Martial 14, 99). The original form of Assy. *quppu* may be *qub'u*, and this may be connected with Arab. *qabw*, vault, cellar, hollow. For the change of *b* and *p* cf. *BAL* 102; *JBL* 35, 281. We have the same root in Arab. *naqb* and *waqb*; the Hebrew dry measure *qab*; Heb. *gebâ*, 'abdominal cavity'; *qôbbâ'*, 'helmet,' *qubbâ't*, 'cup'; also in *qäbr*, 'grave'; *naqâb*, 'to bore'; *yäqb*, ἵπολῆιον = German *Kufe*; Syr. *qúbbâ*, 'reservoir'; *qíbyâ*, 'cistern'; *qibbîta*, 'tank.' Also the original form of Heb. *miqwê*, 'reservoir,' was *miqbê*. In the Talmud we find also *kûbbâ*, 'vat,' 'jar,' with *k* instead of *q* (*AJSL* 23, 246). Cf. also Syr. *kúbbâ*, 'cup, goblet, vessel' (κύβη, κύμβος, κυμβίον).

Our *coop*, therefore, may be a Semitic loanword, while *tun* and *barrel* may be ultimately Sumerian (cf. *JHUC*, No. 296, p. 34).

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<sup>2</sup> For the abbreviations see *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 36, p. 75.